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Fairfax County School Board Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 10, 2026

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Place Fairfax County School Board, Virginia
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- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIcoZ0VMgc4>
- Official School Board page (FCPS): <https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/leadership/school-board>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-28. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:34] Board members, please take your seat.

[00:00:51] If you have not pre-registered and want to speak tonight, please see the clerks. We cannot register you after the hearing starts.

[00:00:58] So if you've not pre-registered already, please come and see us immediately.

[00:01:39] This February 10, 2026, public hearing of the Fairfax County School Board. School Board is called at 6:30 p.m. Good evening, and welcome to the public hearing of the FY2027 proposed budget.

[00:01:57] On behalf of the entire school board, I would like to thank you for sharing your comment with us. This hearing has been broadcasted on Channel 99 and live stream on YouTube and our website at www.fcps.edu forward slash live stream.

[00:02:13] At the January 22nd, 2026 regular meeting, Dr. Reed presented her proposed FY 2027 budget. Earlier today, the school board held a work session on the superintendent's budget proposal. Tonight's public hearing is an opportunity for the public to provide comments on the proposed budget.

[00:02:35] We have 19 pre-registered and walk-in speakers who will address the board at this public hearing. Speakers are allotted 22 minutes, and we ask you, you stay within the time limit. The timer will start when you begin to speak, and the timer will sound after two minutes.

[00:02:53] Please ensure that your remarks are limited to the proposed FY 2027 budget, and then your remarks adhere to the school board expectations for community participation. Included in those expectations are not only one person is allowed at the podium when speaking.

[00:03:09] Neither adults nor children may accompany a speaker at the podium. Copies of all expectations are available at the back of the auditorium. To assist with the flow of tonight's hearing, please ensure you are following along with the speakers list and are ready to go as soon as your name is called.

[00:03:26] If you have a hard copy of your testimony, please give it to the clerk. If you are virtual, please turn on your camera on when you are next to the line to speak so that you just have to unmute when you are called to speak. If you have electronic copies of your testimony and would like to share it with the Board, please email it to communityparticipation@fcps.edu. When your name is called, the Clerk will call your name two times before moving to the next individual on the list. You may find copies of the speaking order in the back of the room or on board docs. Madam Clerk, please call our first

[00:04:03] speaker. Aliyah Daytoni Zhu. Good evening Chair and members of the Board. My name is Alia De Tony-Ju, and I'm here to advocate for continued funding for adult and community education because ACE is not a peripheral program. It is a measurable workforce and community

[00:04:38] infrastructure serving Fairfax County at scale. In FY25 alone, ACE served 10,136 learners, including 4,286 adult ESOL students and 3,757 driver education students.

[00:04:55] along with thousands more in workforce and career development programs. ACE also supports over 225 hourly instructors, works with 127 plus business partners, and plays a direct role in strengthening the skilled workforce pipeline in Fairfax County.

[00:05:11] From a financial standpoint, ACE is already producing significant operating support. ACE generated approximately \$3.15 million in tuition income last year and \$3.4 million in grant income, totaling over \$6 million in combined revenue.

[00:05:28] In FY26, ACE demonstrated clear operational improvements by transitioning to a modern registration system, bringing marketing in-house to save \$180,000 and generating \$70,000 in one weekend through targeted outreach.

[00:05:43] Despite these efficiencies, ACE is forecasting a deficit of approximately \$600,000. That deficit is not a sign that ACE is failing. It's a sign that the program is productive and essential and operating beyond what its current structure can sustain without your support.

[00:06:00] If ACE funding is reduced, Fairfax will lose a proven system that supports adult learners, workforce readiness and adult mobility. I urge the board to prioritize ACE funding because it is efficient, high impact, financially strategic and supports economic mobility.

[00:06:17] Thank you. Hazard. Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the school board. I appreciate the opportunity to speak this evening. I am chair of the adult and community education advisory committee, and I'm here to strongly support the school board's continued investment in FPCS's adult and community education.

[00:06:40] This program is a smart investment for Fairfax County and a modest one. In a system as large as SCPS, adult and community education represents a small line item with an outsized return. These

These programs serve highly motivated neighbors, people who are working, parenting, rebuilding careers, actively reaching out for ways to help improve their lives, their incomes, and their families.

[00:07:02] They are not asking for shortcuts, only for access. Adult and community education lifts them up and provides a real pathway forward. These programs are also a critical part of our workforce pipeline. HVAC, medical specialties, and other high-demand fields depend on this training.

[00:07:18] hospitals clinics construction firms and small businesses rely on the skilled workers these programs produce when these residents succeed the benefits ripple outward their certifications strengthen our workforce stabilize families and improve our communities raising Fairfax County's economic foundation not just for one year but for entire careers to support continued innovation expand course offerings and keep tuition affordable the school board should recognize adult and community education within the school operating fund by maintaining the operating fund transfer and covering staff costs, including salaries and benefits for the

[00:07:57] 26 full-time positions that administer this program. I thank you very much for this opportunity to speak this evening. Molly Cronin. Good evening, Chair Anderson, School Board members, and Dr.

[00:08:20] Reed. I'm a special education teacher in FCPS speaking tonight as an individual. I hope that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors fully funds the requested transfer to schools, but I also want to be realistic and prepared. If FCPS is not fully funded, this board will be forced to make incredibly difficult decisions, ones I don't envy making. If and when those decisions must be made, I urge you to prioritize and protect three critical areas. Fully funding operational and instructional staff negotiated raises, restoring partial class sizes, and reinstating special education department chairs. Last year, negotiated raises were reduced after

[00:08:57] \$121 million shortfall. Competitive salaries are not a luxury. They are essential. Many educators and operational staff can no longer afford to live in Fairfax County due to rising costs and years of uncompetitive pay. A step increase in a 3% market scale adjustment totaling 5.5% could be the difference between staff staying or leaving the county and in many cases leaving the education profession altogether. Strong school communities depend on retaining experienced, committed staff. I also want to share that anxiety is already high among staff and families after last-minute cuts long after the transfer window closed in 2025. Many are worried about D-staffs

[00:09:36] to their positions, teams, and school communities. If reductions are necessary, I respectfully ask for clearer and earlier communication. Last spring, many staff were blindsided by late notices, leaving people scrambling and feeling disposable. The impact on morale was significant, especially within elementary schools. It's not too late for the board of supervisors to do the right thing and fully fund the requested transfer. We must collectively hold our county and state leaders accountable for properly funding public education. Thank you for your time and your continued support

[00:10:07] of FCPS students and staff. Molly Sullivan. My name is Molly Sullivan. I'm a resident of the Sully District and a teacher in the Springfield District. I came here tonight to ask who makes the decisions to renovate playgrounds and on what schedule. My school in Springfield District just received a playground renovation and according to my research plans like that range anywhere from twenty thousand to upwards of hundreds of thousands of dollars there was nothing wrong with our playground we did not need any

[00:10:45] renovation nothing was broken and no one I mean not a single soul at my school knew that this was happening until 48 hours before they broke ground I've had the unique opportunity of teaching internship subbing etc at over 10 schools throughout the county and I will tell you that the new additions to our playground while they're very pricey and they're pretty they end up being very dangerous to students and staff and most admin end up closing a lot of them I've seen broken arms contusions concussions etc so again it's wasted money why aren't teachers and admin consulted when we have a choice to make or when we're being asked to make choices about things like recess equipment we say trust the professionals a lot to families and then we don't often do it within the county

[00:11:24] couldn't that money have been better used to the school where the playground was actually falling apart or why couldn't you've let our school decide if they actually wanted to spend the money that way if it was allocated to us I will tell you that we have mold in our mobile unit out next to our playground we also have mold in classrooms that needs the money way more than we needed a new playground and that money is already spent as you look towards cuts and where to cut frivolous dollars where to spend and how to piece together the finances for SI 27 I'm asking you to revise look at do a deep dive into every single one of your schools before you make those decisions moving forward thank you

[00:11:57] Rachel Smith good evening in filling out the form I decided to think about who I represent I think first and foremost I represent a taxpayer as a former SCPS parent and a former local business owner I look at the funds and how they are allocated in which areas I currently teach kindergarten which adds another lens to my perspective the proposed budget for the county as

[00:12:34] you know is four point one billion dollars the median income is a hundred and twenty seven thousand and some change when you consider whether you think teaching is a true profession or not I would consider it absolutely with the amount of training that our teachers and staff have in addition we need to maintain that our novice teachers have the proper professional development and training with that said I work with people as others have mentioned that can't live in our county support staff that are very close not at the poverty

[00:13:11] level but that it hovers above I'm concerned that the correct conversations to maintain the equity and excellence in Fairfax County is an ongoing conversation an ongoing conversation with people who are very concerned about taxes rising when we look at community partnerships we are charged to create a diverse and a talented workforce a lot of that starts with literacy teaching and

[00:13:44] mathematics if we do not have an excellent staff it's difficult to maintain the standards that are within Fairfax County I really request that those conversations start early with the board of supervisors education is the most foundational thing we have for our society I really enjoyed

[00:14:05] the buses that were around Fairfax County before the budget. Emily Vanderhoff. Good evening budget chair Dixit, Dr. Reed, and members of the board. My name is Emily Vanderhoff. I'm speaking tonight as the president of the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, one of the two unions making up Fairfax education unions, the exclusive bargaining agent for the 28,000 operational and instructional

[00:14:40] employees of FCPS. Our union is glad to see Dr. Reed's proposed budget not only intends to fully fund compensation negotiated in year two of the FEU contracts but also seeks to walk back some of the devastating cuts from last spring we're especially glad to see the restoration of funding for the elementary arts and special education department chairs last year you heard from staff and the community loud and clear the value these positions bring to students they serve at the time the positions

were saved but the cuts were pushed to other positions resulting the same level of cuts to other critical school-based positions. The restoration of these

[00:15:16] two 0.5 positions will mean that we can both retain full-time AARTs and SPED chairs and also preserve essential school-budgeted positions. We're glad to see the continuation of the multi-year commitments made, particularly to family liaisons who will finally be fully converted to contracted employees. This has been a long time coming and we must see it through. And finally, with classrooms bursting at the seams the 0.5 restoration of the class size formula will also provide needed relief the message across work sites this year is always do more with less this budget asks the question don't our students deserve more this is truly both a needs-based budget and one that is rooted in

[00:15:56] reason a modest increase over fiscal forecast projections that can more than be covered when factoring in the meals tax revenue i urge the board to adopt this budget and you know that our union will stand shoulder to shoulder with you to get it funded this year thank you arthur purvis my good friends thank you for your service to our schools and to our community and to our students i am arthur purvis president of the fairfax county taxpayers alliance for 25 years fairfax

[00:16:33] county real estate taxes have been increasing three times faster than household income to pay for raises taxpayers are leaving the gmu center for regional analysis reports that the arlington Alexandria Reston metro area ranks 747th out of 949 areas for corporate development the 138 million transfer increase for FY27 is a four cent increase in the real estate tax rate just to justify this the proposed budget cites SAT scores what SAT scores really reflect is the

[00:17:08] affluence of families able to hire tutors among our 25 high schools average SAT scores vary by 300 points depending on demographics. A truly excellent school system would have high achievement for all demographics. As it is, only five of the 25 high schools have average SAT scores of 1250 or higher, the minimum to get into a competitive college. Moreover, the district's average SAT score fell 28 points since COVID. Lower scores nationwide do not justify lower scores here.

[00:17:44] Thomas Jefferson's SAT score fell in an unprecedented 82 points this year. 36% of FCPS students qualify for subsidized meals. When they graduate, will they be self-sufficient? No, because the school board's goal is to graduate global citizens, not self-sufficient citizens.

[00:18:06] The Taxpayers Alliance recommends a salary freeze until: 1. The portrait of a graduate includes self-sufficiency. two the board rectifies the 28 point drop in SAT scores three the board rectifies the 80 82 point

[00:18:21] drop in thank you Andrea Keller thank you Dr. Reed and school board members I'm a proud FCPS educator of 27 years and a parent of freshmen at Marshall High School I'm here on behalf of my rezoned children and their cohort and families to request that you require budgetary funds to

[00:18:59] guarantee that our high school students will receive transportation to complete their academic paths. Your boundary review process promised last summer that our high school students would have the option to remain. You failed to keep that promise at the December 18 meeting by providing inflated cost estimates, including unnecessary expense of electric buses to justify a recommendation to not provide transportation for rezoned students.

[00:19:28] Thank you to members McElveen, Moon, Maren, Dunn, and Dr. Anderson, who requested current data and alternatives and voted no on that recommendation, demonstrating your commitment to

keeping your promises. But in January, you passed and celebrated the boundary proposals again without requiring transportation equity.

[00:19:49] This neglect has left our children's future in chaotic uncertainty, devaluing them amongst their FCPS peers and placing an inequitable burden on their families. I'm sure this is not the precedent any of you want to set in your new boundary review process. Without transportation our rezoned high school students right to academic continuity will belong only to the privileged that only some families will be able to access it leaving an unmanageable burden for others. Now is the time to keep promise your budget must prioritize private providing transportation for

[00:20:27] Marshall's International Baccalaureate Center students to value them equitably amongst their peers who are regularly transported to centers like Thomas Jefferson and full-time AAP centers you must not approve a budget that fails to fulfill your responsibility to our high school students.

[00:20:44] Casey Hoffman Blalock. My name is Casey I have two children in the Braddock district. I'm a former FCPS teacher and currently work at the central office level for another school division. As of today six FCPS school librarians who earn national board certification have not received their annual stipend. They've been told funding may be available later but there's no guarantee. I'm asking that funds be reallocated from the Office of Professional

[00:21:20] Learning to ensure these teachers are compensated if state funding does not come through. Why did this happen? The Office of Professional Learning classified school librarians as other public school employees on state paperwork this classification is for public school employees who do not teach students central office people like me the video we did not direct OPL to do this and the classification was not applied to art music steam or PE teachers also stps was one of only two divisions statewide to do so as a result the video we did not provide funding for them school librarians do differ from other types of teachers school librarians

[00:21:58] Students teach many classrooms and manage the learning materials that support every content area. And assuming best intentions, I think people can't see past the other duties to appreciate the amount of teaching they do. At the elementary level, they often teach five or six classes every single day.

[00:22:14] At the secondary level, they provide instruction across disciplines resulting in whole grades being taught every week. At Robinson Curriculum Night, the library instruction was cited for every content area as essential to meeting the rigor of the VDOE standards of learning. they are primary instructors for the video is digital learning integration standards so the issue is simple either librarians are classified as classroom teachers by OPL just like other specials teachers on this form or funds must be reallocated from OPL to compensate them for the same hard work the other teachers did let's not rank teachers and let's not create a false narrative that

[00:22:52] does not align to the expectations FCPS has set around the instructional role of school librarians. The annual amount is... Danny Espinoza. Danny Espinoza. Michelle Kates. Michelle Kates. Good evening. I'm Michelle Kates and this year I'm serving as the president of Fairfax County SEPTA, the special education PTA. On behalf of SEPTA, I thank you for the return to fully funding

[00:23:31] the elementary school special education department chair positions. Last year, almost 200 people registered to speak at the public hearing for the approved budget and we heard many, many of them strongly advocating for this funding, so it is with great appreciation that I'm here tonight. At a time

when the federal government plans to do away with the Department of Education and has already decimated its Office of Civil Rights, members of the disability community are tremendously concerned that this will lead to diminishing our civil rights, as OCR monitors state compliance with IDEA, the federal special education legislation. As such, now more than ever, FCPS

[00:24:09] students with disabilities need strong educators related service providers and support staff who will do all they can to help them learn and grow we know that it's a particularly challenging time to be in the field of education septa sees the incredibly hard work being done by teachers and staff we meet regularly with fcps leadership to raise concerns brought to us from students families and special education staff those conversations can be difficult as we're never lacking in problems to address please know that we appreciate your open doors your willingness to listen and your efforts to address our community's concerns striving to do what is in the best

[00:24:45] interest of our students we look forward to a year of fully funded special education department chairs as well as other programming to support our students thank you eli ballatin hi there my name is eli ballatin and i'm here tonight to express my support for so much of what i see in dr reed's proposed budget from fully funding certain department chairs increasing funding for robotics and dance and smaller classrooms there is a lot to be excited and hopeful about.

[00:25:17] I'm the father of a joyful, snugly determined little first grader who happens to get extra support from the special education program. This year my daughter's brand new special education teacher left the school before the first quarter was even over. We scrambled. It took what seemed like forever for the replacement to pass all the administrative hurdles, but our department chair stepped up to fill the gap while we waited. This was possible as our school principal found a way to keep that position full-time this year and I shudder to think what would have happened had that chair been only part-time so I'm grateful to our school principal and grateful that the new budget fully restores the funding for

[00:25:54] special education department chairs I can say I'm similarly grateful that our principal kept and the proposed budget restores the full funding for AART's it's too early to know where my daughter will shine in this world and it's too early to know if she will qualify for the twice exceptional program but even if she never qualifies it's wonderful that such a program exists in public schools. After all, how many children thrive in certain areas and need extra support? In others, I know I did. And since twice exceptional is a collaboration between the special education and advanced academic programs, fully funding both means twice exceptional will be four times as strong

[00:26:33] as it was before. I checked out the math, it checks out. Now if I had more time I would better explain my support for the proposed budget increases in both robotics and dance as well believe it or not my daughter is inspired by both of those items equally I would also better defend my perhaps cheeky requests for better financial support for dedicated speed steam teachers more instructional assistance and elementary math resource teachers but instead I will leave it there thank you all very much Jenna Smith good evening chair board members

[00:27:13] and dr. Reed my name is Jenna Smith and I'm speaking tonight on behalf of every child advocacy foundation a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that students with disabilities receive timely appropriate and legally compliant educational services i'm also the parent of three children with iep's in fcps who attend different elementary schools in order to meet their needs because of the complexity of my children's profiles and circumstances our family has worked closely with special education department

chairs across multiple schools in addition i'm a licensed special education teacher and earlier in my career during my first year of teaching with fcps i experienced firsthand how essential strong leadership and guidance are

[00:27:51] for new teachers serving students with disabilities that early support shaped how i teach how i advocate and how i understand what students and families truly need as both a parent and an advocate i have seen the difference in a knowledgeable the difference a knowledgeable and compassionate special education department chair can make not just for one child but for an entire school community special education department chairs are not optional supports they are essential infrastructure they provide leadership coordination and institutional knowledge that supports students families teachers and instructional assistants alike their guidance helps ensure that services are delivered consistently and equitably regardless of staff turnover or experience level they help translate policy into practice so that special

[00:28:31] education services are not just compliant on paper but meaningful in real classrooms when these positions are underfunded or eliminated the impact is felt immediately new teachers lose mentorship experienced staff lose support families lose clarity and students lose continuity when When these positions are properly supported, schools function more smoothly, staff feel confident and valued, and students receive services that are timely, individualized, and responsive.

[00:28:54] I know without the leadership of several special education department chairs I have come to know, many students would not be receiving services as effectively as they are today. I want to sincerely thank Dr. Reed and the superintendent's office for restoring full funding for these positions, and I urge the board to fully support this restoration. Investing in special education leadership at the elementary level is an investment in children, in educators, and in the long term.

[00:29:19] Lily Sada. Ms. Lily Sada, I'm a parent. I want to thank Dr. Reed and the board for restoring full funding for elementary school education department chairs in next year's budget proposed budget.

[00:29:36] These positions are essential in our schools. They help screening meetings, support evaluations, mentor teachers, ensure that IP timelines and procedures are followed. Our family has been part of several fairfax county public schools and across those experiences we've seen how the presence of a dedicated special education department chair directly affects the student experience my son when this role is supported students receive services more consistently evaluations stay on track and the entire process is clearer and less stressful for them this restore restoration

[00:30:13] strengthens the foundation of the special education in our elementary schools i appreciate the decision to prioritize these positions and urge the board to maintain this funding as the budget moves forward it directly supports equity compliance and the well-being of our students thank you for your for your time emily suchdev hi my name is emily suchdev and i'm a

[00:30:49] parent of a fcps student who receives special education services i'm here tonight in strong support of the proposed budget restoring full funding for elementary school special education department chairs. Thank you for proposing to fully fund the position in the upcoming budget. This restoration is not just about a position. It protects the system that ensures students with disabilities receive timely legally sound services. When these roles are reduced the work does not disappear. It shifts to already overextended staff leading to burnout, delays and compliance risks I also urge the board to prioritize the people who

[00:31:26] make the system work our teachers and staff teachers and specialists are subject-matter experts they bring advanced training and expertise in disability specific instructions intervention and federal law if we value inclusion in high standards we must compensate and support the professionals who deliver them competitive compensation manageable caseloads and protected planning time are essential for retention and stability of our staff.

[00:31:52] Students with disabilities rely on consistency and experienced educators who know how to meet these needs. Families navigating special education like mine rely on stable knowledgeable teams to guide them through complex systems and ensure that their children receive appropriate services. If we value students we must value the professionals who make their success possible. Behind every budget decision is a child who depends on us to get this right. Thank you for your time and your

[00:32:23] commitment to all students. Norm Hall. Norm Hall. Yes, Chair Dixit, Chair Anderson, Vice Chair, Lady, members of the Board, and Dr. Reed. As Chair of the Fairfax County Employee Advisory Council, I serve the 17,000 employees in the merit system of Fairfax County government. Like FCPS, there are three collective bargaining units. I speak tonight in support of all of these agreements.

[00:32:56] Most of you know my history of advocating on behalf of county and school employees who work in your schools, in your health clinics, and in child care spaces. Resources that help our staff do their jobs well in the long run, our investments that support the lives of children, their families, and the school communities of Fairfax County. There's a notable difference between among the collective bargaining agreements. I am among those working for Fairfax County government scheduled to receive a two percent cost of living adjustment. The MRA and the FCPS budget is set to three percent. With enough revenue to accommodate both budgets, equity rests on the

[00:33:32] wage provisions embedded in your salary steps and the funded performance pay provisions in mind. To repeat a request from last year, please do not make funding arguments that are based on the historical share of the county's operating funds. Such arguments pit FCPS employees against county employees. Please do pay some more attention to Fairfax County budget projections that have been made. Last year saw hastily arranged class size cuts and reductions in primary level special education leads that were presented only after the county budget hearings. Alternative courses

[00:34:09] of action might have led to differential pay boosts that assisted with staffing in the most critical areas, much as county hiring decisions vary across our many departments. I heard zero was the amount that fcps should expect as a change in the county transfer amount instead the budget before you calls for an increase of 138 million dollars it comes across as the amount of further cuts to county programs and staffing you would like to see last year at this time there seemed

[00:34:38] to be no Diane Cooper Gould and Cooper Gould co-founder of Fairfax County Septa and current board member but today I am speaking as an individual um I first want to thank superintendent Reed and FCPS staff for proposing a budget that fully funds elementary special education department chairs. I think it's really important that we all in the community recognize that with the current economic climate hard funding

[00:35:13] choices must continuously be made. There is absolutely no way to make everyone happy and so the superintendent and her staff are having to make really challenging choices and with the knowledge that they can't do everything that we wish they could. I want to encourage the board to accept that this budget and I want to speak a little bit about how as a special education advocate who has actually been

working with IEP teams for the past seven years in school buildings how critically important special education department chairs are. I want to thank all of our staff for how hard they're working in

[00:35:50] these difficult times and especially now I'd like to highlight department chairs. A special education department chair is absolutely integral in determining whether or not a kid will receive the kind of support and services that they really need. They set the tone for their departments, they set the tone in IEP meetings, and they set the tone with families. And I have seen department chairs who have literally come in and within a year changed the entire tenor of the room so that it is a positive, welcoming, warm place where

[00:36:26] parents get their questions answered, staff feel supported, and everyone is working for a common goal. Without those positions, we don't have mentors for new teachers. We don't have people who are subject experts in many different programs rather than just one. We don't have that kind of ongoing and lasting

[00:36:47] support. It is very easy when projecting numbers and budgets. Maura Madigan. Good evening. My name is Maura Madigan and I'm a librarian in FCPS. I'm also one of the national board certified teachers who's been denied my stipend this year. I emailed all the school board members and several FCPS leaders about this including Dr. Reed and many of you responded with words of encouragement. Thank you for that. Only FCPS and Chesterfield County librarians were denied their

[00:37:35] awards. VDOE is blaming the FCPS Office of Professional Learning and the Office of Professional Learning is blaming the VDOE. What's clear to me is that neither party truly understands what librarians do. We're on a teacher contract, hold valid teaching licenses, and spend a large part of our days teaching. However, the Office of Professional Learning misclassified librarians as other public school employees, a group that includes non-teaching staff like counselors, SBITs, and Central Office personnel. I stood in this very auditorium two years

[00:38:12] ago with other National Board Certified Teachers as our achievements were recognized, so I know that FCPS values this accomplishment. I urge you to reallocate \$15,000 from the Office of Professional Learning Budget to fund the six FCPS librarians who've been excluded from the award. This is a small amount for Fairfax County but a large amount for us. However the negative impact goes beyond money. FCPS claims to be invested in the well-being and professional development of employees. Words of gratitude and affirmation hold little

[00:38:52] value when actions don't support them. Misclassifying school librarians as non-teaching employees and blaming the state demonstrates a lack of respect,

[00:39:01] understanding and appreciation. Thank you for your time. Vanessa Hall. Hi thank you all. I'm a parent. I'm also on the board of a couple of groups but I'm speaking on behalf of myself and my input comes in the form of a story. When my daughter started high school our first stop was to meet the school psychologist and I'll call him Mr. D because I know transitioning is always hard especially for kids who have special education

[00:39:39] supports. And I'm really glad we made that connection because Mr. D has been the primary adult she's gone to time and time again. In fact, in the first month of ninth grade, she had an insurmountable problem in American Sign Language, which is not uncommon for dyslexics, by the way.

[00:39:56] Mr. D and I worked together to empower her to make informed good choices, which enabled her to advocate for herself to move into a class where she thrived. With Mr. D's guidance, my daughter went from feeling like a failure and having grades that reflected those feelings to getting nearly all A's her freshman year.

[00:40:15] In other words, Mr. D's immediate efforts and availability supported my daughter to begin her high school career with confidence by empowering her to succeed rather than fail. And my daughter is one of hundreds, if not thousands, whose education outcomes have been improved by Mr. D or someone like him.

[00:40:32] However, due to last year's budget cuts, Mr. D is splitting his time between Woodson in Lake Braddock High Schools, which means he's available half-time at each school causing instability because students don't know when he'll be at their school. It also makes it hard for Mr. D to serve the individual needs of 5,000 students.

[00:40:52] Of course students can always see someone else, but we each know it's not the same as working with your trusted adult. Every single school from elementary through high school deserves a Mr., Mrs., or Mix D, But last year's budget cuts eliminated trusted adults from across the county and students are suffering.

[00:41:11] I bet their parents are suffering too. So please do whatever you can to reinstate. Ms. Dixit, that was our last speaker. Thank you for sharing your comments today.

[00:41:27] The board is scheduled to take action on the FY 2027 proposed budget at our regular meeting on Thursday, February 26, 2026. If you wish to provide any feedback to the board before this vote or to submit written copies of your testimony provided today, please do so by sending your comments to community participation at fcps.edu.

[00:41:52] Thank you for your participation and have a nice day. The public hearing of the Fairfax County School Board is adjourned as of 7.11 p.m.



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